



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 551ST SIGNAL BATTALION
BLDG 25605 BARNES AVENUE
FORT GORDON, GEORGIA 30905

ATZH-TBB

1 October 2016

MEMORANDUM FOR All 551st Signal Battalion Soldiers and Civilians

SUBJECT: Policy Memorandum No. 13 – Religious Accommodations

1. References:

- a. DODI 1300.17, 22 January 2014.
- b. AR 600-20, Army Command Policy, 6 November 2014.
- c. TRADOC Regulation 350-6, Enlisted Initial Entry Training Policies and Administration, 7 November 2013.
- d. Memorandum, ATZH-TB, 30 August 2012, subject: Policy Letter #17: Privileges and Limitations for Soldiers in Training.

2. The purpose of this policy is to provide command guidance regarding accommodating religious practices for Soldiers in training assigned to the 551st Signal Battalion.

3. The 551st Signal Battalion places a high value on the rights of its Soldiers to observe tenets of their respective religions or to observe no religion at all. In accordance with Army policies, I will approve requests for accommodation of religious practices unless accommodation will have an adverse impact on unit readiness, individual readiness, unit cohesion, morale, good order, discipline, safety, and/or health. As used in this policy, these factors are referred to individually and collectively as "military necessity." All requests for accommodation of religious practices are assessed on a case-by-case basis. Each request is considered based on its unique facts, the nature of the requested religious accommodation, the effect of approval or denial on the Soldier's exercise of religion, and the effect of approval or denial on military necessity. Accommodation of a Soldier's religious practices is examined against military necessity and cannot be guaranteed at all times.:

- a. All Soldiers, to the fullest possible extent, should be allowed to practice their religious faith IAW their mission requirements.
- b. Military Occupational Specialty-Initial (MOS-I) Soldiers: Soldiers must request / coordinate with chain of command to attend worship services or religious events. If no other person of that faith group is within the battalion, the Soldier should

coordinate with their chain of command and unit chaplain to find a Battle Buddy within the Battalion of that same faith group to attend the same worship service or religious event off post. If no other person of that faith group is within the Battalion, the duty van and NCO can transport the Soldier(s) to and from the religious event.

- c. Phase V and V+ Soldiers are authorized to attend off-post, weekend worship events and special occasions, to include concerts, conferences and holy day celebrations. Weekday events may be allowed by exception for some special occasions or holy days, mission permitting, but will not be a regular occurrence.
 - d. Local churches are not authorized to pick up Soldiers in training in Privately Owned Vehicles (POVs). If a local church or religious organization has its own vehicle (i.e. bus, van) that is considered its organizational property, Soldiers may ride in that vehicle with at least two battle buddies to that event. Organizational vehicles must be clearly marked with the name of that organization on its exterior. Transportation arrangements must be detailed in advance to the satisfaction of the Soldier's chain of command (e.g., identity of driver, location and time of pick up, location of church, location and time of drop off, etc).
4. The point of contact for this memorandum is the Battalion Chaplain, CH Ronald Kambuku at ronald.kambuku.mil@mail.mil or (706) 791-4298.



ALTON J. JOHNSON
LTC, SC
Commanding